Blood Feud

Bob's whole world imploded. His tightly wound nerves, pent up anger and anguish at Nellie's death, were eclipsed by the massive pillaging of his home and businesses – by his own family! Arriving back in Trinidad; after seeing to Nellie's burial at Ft. Logan's Veteran Cemetery; Robert finds strangers in his home on 1919 Pinon St. Then came the soul searing knowledge that all he worked so hard for; to keep *his* children, *his* family all together, had been ripped away, sold and hocked. Whether it was Child Welfare, his dad or mom Gertrude who orchestrated this assault didn't matter. The town's sheriff was waiting when he returned from burying Nellie; ready to block Robert's wrath, before it created more havoc.

All eleven children had been either adopted away, put in foster homes or lived with Frank and Gertrude at the direction of Child Welfare. Bob kept little Sam with him, hoping to salvage at least one son for a legacy. Bob took a job fixing televisions in town, then rented an old, four room adobe casita, on Grant Street, just a few blocks away from earlier chaos. A neighbor's daughter works in the Welfare office. She came home one day and told her dad there were rumors, some people were out to get rid of Bob Vallejos. That neighbor passed the warning to Bob.

"He says, 'if you don't have any weapons, I have one.' I says, 'I don't need a weapon – I got my hands and body… He won't get to me first. I'll be waitin for him, now that you told me.' "

Bob stood alone at the kitchen sink, tensely running the edges of his fingernails along the tile grout. He stared at his nighttime reflection in the window. Little Sam was fussing in his highchair behind him, whining for something to eat. Bob set a few crackers before his son, then turned to look for more substantial fare in the cupboards.

A thunderous BANG startled father and son. The kitchen door was kicked in, and a rifle barrel jabbed into the room.

"As soon as he came in the house, I took that rifle away from him, and I busted it all to hell on the door jamb. He tried to hit me with a kettle full of hot water, but I dodged that, and it spilled all over the floor."

Bob grabbed up his screaming son and headed for the door. He recognized his assailant.

"He stabbed me in the shoulder blade (and I dropped Sam to the floor). I spun around, wrapped (up) and broke his arm. 'Carlito! You gonna fuck with me I'm gonna kill ya!"

Bob proceeded to render Carlito physically mangled and unconscious. The entire kitchen floor was covered in blood. From a neighbor's panicked phone call, the cops and an ambulance arrived. Carlito was rushed to the hospital, as a medic patched up Bob's knife wound. One of the responding patrolmen pulled Bob aside.

"Damn it Bob, this is a hell of a mess! You know whose kid that is, that hit you tonight? That's old Sandoval's son!"

"Not my fucking problem, he attacked me!" Bob winced as he rotated his bandaged shoulder.

"Shit, this looks like a setup for sure." The cop leaned closer to Bob's ear. "You better get the hell outta town! You may not have killed that SOB, but it looks like you broke his damn neck!"

The patrolman dug into his hip pocket, pulling out his wallet.

"Here, that's all I got on me. Take your son and get outta here before they finish the job!"

Bob nodded, tears welling up in his eyes. He grasped the officer's hand for a moment, then slowly pulled away with the folded bills.

"Thanks…" he whispered.

Stepping away from the flashing lights, Bob sprinted next door. A neighbor lady was holding little Sam as he fitfully slept. She had bundled Sam with blankets and presented Bob with a sack of food.

"Good luck…we'll miss you." She said quietly, as she handed Bob his sleeping son.

"Gracias." Bob replied, bestowing a soft peck on her cheek.

As the cooling summer night progressed, Bob bundled his son hurriedly into his truck. He coaxed the cold engine to life and slipped the old Chevy into gear. Bob pulled the truck away from the hell that kept following him. The full moon was just rising in the East, and Bob kept it and Trinidad, in his rear-view mirror.